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**Clark County
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report**

Project Number: PRJ-163673 / LUP-76604
Project Name: Fort Vancouver Regional Library/Vancouver Community Library
Project Address: 1007 E Mill Plain Boulevard
Applicant/Owner: City of Vancouver
Staff: Mark Person, AICP, Senior Planner
Meeting Date: November 6, 2019

I. Summary

The Fort Vancouver Regional Library is located at 1007 E Mill Plain Boulevard (parcel 38279926). The property owner has requested the building be nominated for inclusion on the Clark County Heritage Register.

II. Clark County Heritage Register and National Register of Historic Places Status

Consent for nomination and designation to the Clark County Heritage Register has been signed by the owners of the property. The subject building is not currently on a historic register.

III. Historic Name

Fort Vancouver Regional Library

IV. Board Responsibility

Under the City of Vancouver Ordinance M-3243 (VMC Chapter 17.39), the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission has the responsibility for reviewing matters of historic preservation within the City of Vancouver.

V. Statement of Significance

The application identifies applicable Clark County Heritage Register Criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Criterion 1 relates to the building's association with events of significance, Criterion 2 is that it embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style or method of design or

construction, Criterion 3 is that is an outstanding work of a designer, builder or architect, Criterion 4 is that it exemplifies or reflects special elements of the county's history and Criterion 5 relates to persons of significance in national, state, or local history.

VI. Physical Description from Nomination

The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation has assessed the property on a number of occasions and provided a description of the building via their WISAARD database. The description on the WISAARD site was produced by Brandon Grilc. Grilc was contracted by Archaeological Services in Vancouver, Washington to assess and describe the building. He provides a quality description of the architectural elements of the building and recommends its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. Grilc's report states:

The FVRL building (approximately [48,042] sq. ft.) was built in 1963 by Elmer E. Settegran and designed by Cassady & Associates (Houser 2004). [The landscape design was subcontracted by Cassady to Huntington and Roth, landscape architects, in Portland.] The library is built atop a poured-in-place concrete foundation with two subterranean vehicle bays (loading area) near the southeast corner of the southwest elevation. The library is faced with recessed aluminum window walls, brick veneer in a stretcher bond, and vertical smooth-form concrete panels. The window walls consist of fixed aluminum ribbon windows between blue aluminum channel stiffener face panels and aluminum battens. The walls are framed with a protruding concrete water table and eaves. The roof displays a shallow-eave overhang with metal coping.



Image from Grilc Assessment

The primary façade (approximately 168'-0" in length) faces northeast toward E Mill Plain Blvd and is comprised of a window wall consisting of narrow vertical lights to the northwest, the main entrance, and a window wall to the southeast. The main entrance consists of a double-door opening with full-light aluminum doors framed by a fixed multi-light aluminum window wall under a flat-roof concrete canopy supported by five square-shaped concrete columns (approximately 69' 3" x 9' 6"). The canopy roof is finished with built-up roofing and metal coping.

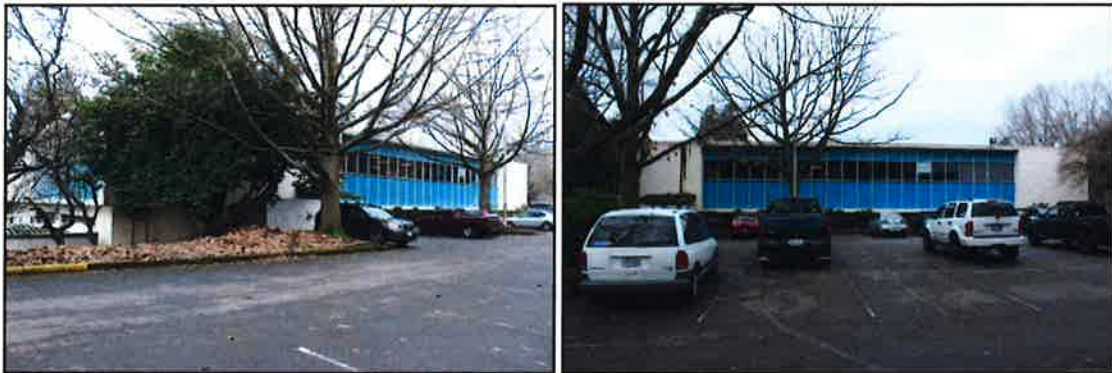
Original metal light fixtures are attached to the columns near the canopy roofline. A secondary entrance consisting of a double-door opening with full-light aluminum doors is located above the main entrance within the window wall to the northwest. The secondary entrance is accessed by a concrete ramp with a brick ramp wall. The ramp wall is capped with concrete coping and aluminum rails. Metal pipe handrails are located along the ramp wall leading to the secondary entrance. The window wall southeast of the main entrance consists of narrow vertical lights between two square-shaped lights atop a fixed aluminum ribbon window base with a matching glazing pattern. The window wall is framed by a brick wall with signage that reads "Operations Center for the FVRL District" above a brick base at the northeast corner of the façade.



Images from Grilc Assessment

The southeast elevation (approximately 126' -0" in length) includes a center window wall with narrow vertical lights above a fixed aluminum ribbon window base with a matching glazing pattern. The window wall is flanked by vertical concrete panels above a matching base to the southwest and a brick base at the northeast corner of the elevation. The elevation is extended by a wall (approximately 39' -0" in length) of four vertical concrete panels above the loading area to the southwest. A subterranean pedestrian door consisting of a single-door opening with a flush-panel metal door is located between the window and brick base to the northeast. The entrance is accessed by a set of concrete steps with metal pipe handrails. A wood shed-roof lean-to is attached to the elevation southwest of the window wall. The lean-to is bounded by a metal chain-link fence with white fence slats. The southwest elevation (approximately 168' -0" in length) is comprised of the projecting loading area (approximately 69' -1" x30' 0" and abutting fan/utilities room (approximately 30' -8"x30' -0") to the southeast, and the principle elevation (approximately 68' -3" in length) to the northwest. The loading area includes a window wall with narrow vertical lights flanked by vertical concrete panels at the ground floor and a pair of vehicle bays with metal roll-up doors below grade. The bays are divided by a concrete column with a metal exhaust vent. A pedestrian door consisting of a single-door opening with a single-light flush-panel metal door under a projecting canopy supported by two tension rods is located to the northwest of the vehicle bays. The pedestrian

door is accessed by an elevated concrete loading dock with a ramp and metal pipe handrails. The fan/utilities room is clad in vertical concrete panels with metal air-intake louvers near the roofline and northwest of the pedestrian door. A one-story, square-shaped addition with a flat roof is attached to the northwest-facing wall (approximately 30' -0" in length) of the fan/utilities room. The addition is faced with stucco and includes a double door opening with flush-panel metal doors on its northwest elevation. The flat roof is covered with thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) roofing and is finished with metal coping. A protruding metal exhaust vent is located at the center of the roof. The recessed principle wall of the southwest elevation consists of a center double-door opening with single-light flush-panel metal doors under a projecting concrete canopy. A fixed recessed vertical three-light aluminum window capped with blue aluminum channel stiffener face panels and aluminum battens is located above the entrance. The entrance is flanked by window walls with narrow vertical lights above a fixed aluminum ribbon window base. A one-story vertical smooth-concrete panel ends the principle wall to the northwest. A one-story metal shed roof covered patio with a corrugated fiberglass roof and vinyl gutter is attached to the elevation northwest of the entrance. A projecting curved brick screen wall is attached to the southwest elevation near the northwest corner.



Images from Grilc Assessment



Images from Grilc Assessment

The northwest elevation (approximately 126' 0" in length) consists of a center window wall with narrow vertical lights flanked by vertical concrete panels. The

window wall is located above a fixed aluminum ribbon window base with a matching glazing pattern framed by brick bases the north northeast and southwest. A set of concrete steps leading to the secondary entrance on the northeast façade and a brick wall about the elevation near the northeast corner. A metal handrail is attached to the elevation above the steps. Two attached signs reading “FVRLibraries (Fort Vancouver Regional Libraries) Operations Center” and “Fort Vancouver Regional Library Foundation” are located above metal handrail. An enclosed metal chain-link fence with green fence slats is attached to the elevation under the window wall near the brick base to the southwest.



Images from Grilc Assessment

The flat roof of the library is covered with built up roofing with a short parapet capped with metal coping and attached square-shaped flood lights. One HVAC unit is located on the roof above the fan/utilities room near the southwest elevation.

The interior of the loading area includes finished concrete floors, concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls, and a concrete waffle slab ceiling with linear fluorescent light fixtures. The remainder of the library interior was not accessed on the date of survey.

After analyzing historic and existing aerial photos, historic photos, as well as the resource during a field investigation on January 23, 2019, it is apparent that minimal alterations have been made to the library since the date of its construction in 1963 (Houser 2004). Changes that have been made to the library include a new roof circa 1994 (Clark County 2019), a canopy over the pedestrian door on the southwest elevation circa 1998 (Clark County 2019), the one-story addition to the fan/utilities room circa 2000 (Google Earth 2019), the addition of pipe handrails near the main entrance circa 2004 (Houser 2004), the covered patio circa 2009 (Clark County 2019), and the installation of the HVAC system in 2012 (Google Earth 2019). The signage and the enclosed chain-link fence were added to the northwest elevation circa 2014 (Google Earth 2019). Other alterations made to the

library include the addition of lights to the roof, and the lean-to and chain-link fence on the southeast elevation (dates unknown).



Loading dock and waffle slab

The library retains all aspects of historic integrity (location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, feeling, and location) based on its retention of its original location, building materials, design, minimal alterations to its immediate surroundings, and its continued ability to evoke a historic sense of a past period of time, and function.

Because a reconnaissance level survey results in the recordation of only observable information, little to no historic background information or contextual histories were discovered during the survey. Therefore, the resource is recommended as unevaluated under NRHP Criterion A, B, and D. The library is recommended as eligible under NRHP Criterion C as an exemplary example of a New Formalism-style building due to its retention of its original form, character defining features, such as its colonnade at the main entrance, aluminum ribbon window walls with aluminum panels, use of brick, and smooth form concrete, and its original building finishes. The alterations that have been made to the library have little impact on the overall design, material, or workmanship associated with its original construction style.

VII. Staff Review and Comment

The review criteria for the proposal are listed in the adopted rules and regulations of the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission (VMC 17.39). Any building, structure, site, object or district may be designated for inclusion in the Clark County Heritage Register if it:

- Is at least fifty years old, or is of lesser age and has exceptional importance; and
- Has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; and
- Is significantly associated with the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or cultural heritage of the community; and
- Meets at least one of the criteria listed at VMC 17.39.070.

The nomination identifies the following criteria as applicable:

- It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state, or local history.
- It embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of construction, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- It is an outstanding work of a designer, builder, or architect who has made a substantial contribution to their field.
- It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the county's history.
- Is associated with the lives of persons significant in national, state or local history.

The nominated structure is over 50 years of age. The FVRL building was constructed in 1963. The building is located within the Hudson's Bay Fort Vancouver boundaries. The building utilizes a podium base, colonnades and innovative use of concrete.

The nomination details the building and its critical role in the expansion of FVRL system services. Between 1963 and 2011, when the FVRL was moved downtown, significant growth and expansion of the library system took place.

The nomination has provided detailed biographic information on Eva Santee and Donald Cassady. Eva Santee was a prominent Clark County librarian beginning in 1940. Ms. Santee played a critical role in establishing the first inter-county library district in the state in southwest Washington in 1950. Upon creation, she was named as the director and played a significant role in expanding library services and circulation. Ms. Santee was a main proponent for the expansion of the library system and construction of the FVRL building. Eva Santee worked closely with the architect (Donald Cassady) on the FVRL building and had a large influence on its final design.

Donald Cassady opened his own architectural firm in Vancouver in 1959. The FVRL building was one of his first major works. Cassady worked with Eva Santee and the library board to understand the needs of the new building. The Vancouver City Council and Eva Santee insisted the building be accessible. The FVRL is believed to be one of the earliest examples of considering accessibility into a public building in the city of Vancouver. Donald Cassady won national and regional awards for his designs throughout his career.

The National Register Bulletin regarding criteria for evaluation notes when using persons as a criterion for nomination of a building, said persons must be individually significant within a historical context. It must be shown and documented that the persons' activities during the period associated with the building are historically significant. Staff finds that based on the information provided, Eva Santee and Donald Cassady had significant influences in local history at the time of their association with the building.

Staff recommends placing the FVRL building on the local register. The Clark County Historic Preservation Commission shall make the final decision regarding placement on the register.

Exhibits

1. Vicinity Map
2. Vancouver Land Use Application
3. Nomination Form

VIII. Appeal

The commission's decision regarding a nomination to the Clark County Heritage Register may be appealed to the City Council. Appeal of the City Council's decision may be appealed to superior court. The letter of appeal shall state the case number designated by the city and the name of the applicant, name and signature of each petitioner and a statement showing that each petitioner is entitled to file the appeal under VMC Chapter 20, and the specific aspect(s) of the decision and reasons why each aspect is in error as a matter of fact or law, and the evidence relied upon to prove the error.

A fee of \$1,826.00 must accompany the appeal. However, if the aggrieved party is a recognized neighborhood association, the fee assessed is \$138.00. Submit the appeal request and fee to Development Review Services, either at the Customer Service Counter, first floor of the City Hall, 415 W 6th Street, Vancouver, WA, or to PO Box 1995, Vancouver, WA, 98668-1995.

For more information on the appeal process, please refer to Vancouver Municipal Code 20.210.130 or contact Community and Economic Development Department at 360-487-7885.



Report Prepared by
Mark Person, AICP, Senior Planner

10/21/19
Date



Greg Turner, Manager
Land Use Team

10.21.19
Date